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## Statesman

By Plato

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## Statesman

By Plato

Written 360 B.C.E

Translated by Benjamin Jowett

### Persons of the Dialogue

THEODORUS

SOCRATES

THE ELEATIC STRANGER

THE YOUNGER SOCRATES

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**Socrates.** I owe you many thanks, indeed, Theodorus, for the acquaintance both of Theaetetus and of the Stranger.

**Theodorus.** And in a little while, Socrates, you will owe me three times as many, when they have completed for you the delineation of the Statesman and of the Philosopher, as well as of the Sophist.

**Soc.** Sophist, statesman, philosopher! O my dear Theodorus, do my ears truly witness that this is the estimate formed of them by the great calculator and geometrician?

**Theod.** What do you mean, Socrates?

**Soc.** I mean that you rate them all at the same value, whereas they are really separated by an interval, which no geometrical ratio can express.

**Theod.** By Ammon, the god of Cyrene, Socrates, that is a very fair hit; and shows that you have not forgotten your geometry. I will retaliate on you at some other time, but I must now ask the

Stranger, who will not, I hope, tire of his goodness to us, to proceed either with the Statesman or with the Philosopher, whichever he prefers.

**Stranger.** That is my duty, Theodorus; having begun I must go on, and not leave the work unfinished. But what shall be done with Theaetetus?

**Theod.** In what respect?

**Str.** Shall we relieve him, and take his companion, the Young Socrates, instead of him? What do you advise?

**Theod.** Yes, give the other a turn, as you propose. The young always do better when they have intervals of rest.

**Soc.** I think, Stranger, that both of them may be said to be in some way related to me; for the one, as you affirm, has the cut of my ugly face, the other is called by my name. And we should always be on the look-out to recognize a kinsman by the style of his conversation. I myself was discoursing with Theaetetus yesterday, and I have just been listening to his answers; my namesake I have not yet examined, but I must. Another time will, do for me; to-day let him answer you.

**Str.** Very good. Young Socrates, do you hear what the elder Socrates is proposing?

Young Socrates. I do.

**Str.** And do you agree to his proposal?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** As you do not object, still less can I. After the Sophist, then, I think that the Statesman naturally follows next in the order of enquiry. And please to say, whether he, too, should be ranked among those who have science.

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** Then the sciences must be divided as before?

**Y. Soc.** I dare say.

**Str.** But yet the division will not be the same?

**Y. Soc.** How then?

**Str.** They will be divided at some other point.

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** Where shall we discover the path of the Statesman? We must find and separate off, and set our seal upon this, and we will set the mark of another class upon all diverging paths. Thus the soul will conceive of all kinds of knowledge under two classes.

**Y. Soc.** To find the path is your business, Stranger, and not mine.

**Str.** Yes, Socrates, but the discovery, when once made, must be yours as well as mine.

**Y. Soc.** Very good.

**Str.** Well, and are not arithmetic and certain other kindred arts, merely abstract knowledge, wholly separated from action?

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** But in the art of carpentering and all other handicrafts, the knowledge of the workman is merged in his work; he not only knows, but he also makes things which previously did not exist.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** Then let us divide sciences in general into those which are practical and those which are purely intellectual.

**Y. Soc.** Let us assume these two divisions of science, which is one whole.

**Str.** And are "statesman," "king," "master," or "householder," one and the same; or is there a science or art answering to each of these names? Or rather, allow me to put the matter in another way.

**Y. Soc.** Let me hear.

**Str.** If any one who is in a private station has the skill to advise one of the public physicians, must not he also be called a physician?

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** And if any one who is in a private station is able to advise the ruler of a country, may not he be said to have the knowledge which the ruler himself ought to have?

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** But, surely the science of a true king is royal science?

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** And will not he who possesses this knowledge, whether he happens to be a ruler or a private man, when regarded only in reference to his art, be truly called "royal"?

**Y. Soc.** He certainly ought to be.

**Str.** And the householder and master are the same?

**Y. Soc.** Of course.

**Str.** Again, a large household may be compared to a small state:-will they differ at all, as far as

government is concerned?

**Y. Soc.** They will not.

**Str.** Then, returning to the point which we were just now discussing, do we not clearly see that there is one science of all of them; and this science may be called either royal or political or economical; we will not quarrel with any one about the name.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly not.

**Str.** This too, is evident, that the king cannot do much with his hands, or with his whole body, towards the maintenance of his empire, compared with what he does by the intelligence and strength of his mind.

**Y. Soc.** Clearly not.

**Str.** Then, shall we say that the king has a greater affinity to knowledge than to manual arts and to practical life in general?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly he has.

**Str.** Then we may put all together as one and the same-statesmanship and the statesman-the kingly science and the king.

**Y. Soc.** Clearly.

**Str.** And now we shall only be proceeding in due order if we go on to divide the sphere of knowledge?

**Y. Soc.** Very good.

**Str.** Think whether you can find any joint or parting in knowledge.

**Y. Soc.** Tell me of what sort.

**Str.** Such as this: You may remember that we made an art of calculation?

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** Which was, unmistakably, one of the arts of knowledge?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** And to this art of calculation which discerns the differences of numbers shall we assign any other function except to pass judgment on their differences?

**Y. Soc.** How could we?

**Str.** You know that the master-builder does not work himself, but is the ruler of workmen?

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** He contributes knowledge, not manual labour?

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** And may therefore be justly said to share in theoretical science?

**Y. Soc.** Quite true.

**Str.** But he ought not, like the calculator, to regard his functions as at and when he has formed a judgment;-he must assign to the individual workmen their appropriate task until they have completed the work.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** Are not all such sciences, no less than arithmetic and the like, subjects of pure knowledge; and is not the difference between the two classes, that the one sort has the power of judging only, and the other of ruling as well?

**Y. Soc.** That is evident.

**Str.** May we not very properly say, that of all knowledge, there are there are two divisions-one which rules, and the other which judges?

**Y. Soc.** I should think so.

**Str.** And when men have anything to do in common, that they should be of one mind is surely a desirable thing?

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** Then while we are at unity among ourselves, we need not mind about the fancies of others?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly not.

**Str.** And now, in which of these divisions shall we place the king?-Is he a judge and a kind of spectator? Or shall we assign to him the art of command-for he is a ruler?

**Y. Soc.** The latter, clearly.

**Str.** Then we must see whether there is any mark of division in the art of command too. I am inclined to think that there is a distinction similar to that of manufacturer and retail dealer, which parts off the king from the herald.

**Y. Soc.** How is this?

**Str.** Why, does not the retailer receive and sell over again the productions of others, which have been sold before?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly he does.

**Str.** And is not the herald under command, and does he not receive orders, and in his turn give them to others?

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** Then shall we mingle the kingly art in the same class with the art of the herald, the interpreter, the boatswain, the prophet, and the numerous kindred arts which exercise command; or, as in the preceding comparison we spoke of manufacturers, or sellers for themselves, and of retailers,-seeing, too, that the class of supreme rulers, or rulers for themselves, is almost nameless-shall we make a word following the same analogy, and refer kings to a supreme or ruling-for-self science, leaving the rest to receive a name from some one else? For we are seeking the ruler; and our enquiry is not concerned with him who is not a ruler.

**Y. Soc.** Very good.

**Str.** Thus a very fair distinction has been attained between the man who gives his own commands, and him who gives another's. And now let us see if the supreme power allows of any further division.

**Y. Soc.** By all means.

**Str.** I think that it does; and please to assist me in making the division.

**Y. Soc.** At what point?

**Str.** May not all rulers be supposed to command for the sake of producing something?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** Nor is there any difficulty in dividing the things produced into two classes.

**Y. Soc.** How would you divide them?

**Str.** Of the whole class some have life and some are without life.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** And by the help of this distinction we may make, if we please, a subdivision of the section of knowledge which commands.

**Y. Soc.** At what point?

**Str.** One part may be set over the production of lifeless, the other of living objects; and in this way the whole will be divided.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** That division, then, is complete; and now we may leave one half, and take up the other; which may also be divided into two.

**Y. Soc.** Which of the two halves do you mean?

**Str.** Of course that which exercises command about animals. For, surely, the royal science is not like that of a master-workman, a science presiding over lifeless objects;-the king has a nobler function, which is the management and control of living beings.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** And the breeding and tending of living beings may be observed to be sometimes a tending of the individual; in other cases, a common care of creatures in flocks?

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** But the statesman is not a tender of individuals-not like the driver or groom of a single ox or horse; he is rather to be compared with the keeper of a drove of horses or oxen.

**Y. Soc.** Yes, I see, thanks to you.

**Str.** Shall we call this art of tending many animals together, the art of managing a herd, or the art of collective management?

**Y. Soc.** No matter;-Whichever suggests itself to us in the course of conversation.

**Str.** Very good, Socrates; and, if you continue to be not too particular about names, you will be all the richer in wisdom when you are an old man. And now, as you say, leaving the discussion of the name, -can you see a way in which a person, by showing the art of herding to be of two kinds, may cause that which is now sought amongst twice the number of things, to be then sought amongst half that number?

**Y. Soc.** I will try;-there appears to me to be one management of men and another of beasts.

**Str.** You have certainly divided them in a most straightforward and manly style; but you have fallen into an error which hereafter I think that we had better avoid.

**Y. Soc.** What is the error?

**Str.** I think that we had better not cut off a single small portion which is not a species, from many larger portions; the part should be a species. To separate off at once the subject of investigation, is a most excellent plan, if only the separation be rightly made; and you were under the impression that you were right, because you saw that you would come to man; and this led you to hasten the steps. But you should not chip off too small a piece, my friend; the safer way is to cut through the middle; which is also the more likely way of finding classes. Attention to this principle makes all the difference in a process of enquiry.

**Y. Soc.** What do you mean, Stranger?

**Str.** I will endeavour to speak more plainly out of love to your good parts, Socrates; and, although I cannot at present entirely explain myself, I will try, as we proceed, to make my meaning a little clearer.

**Y. Soc.** What was the error of which, as you say, we were guilty in our recent division?

**Str.** The error was just as if some one who wanted to divide the human race, were to divide them after the fashion which prevails in this part of the world; here they cut off the Hellenes as one species, and all the other species of mankind, which are innumerable, and have no ties or common language, they include under the single name of "barbarians," and because they have one name they are supposed to be of one species also. Or suppose that in dividing numbers you were to cut off ten thousand from all the rest, and make of it one species, comprehending the first under another separate name, you might say that here too was a single class, because you had given it a single name. Whereas you would make a much better and more equal and logical classification of numbers, if you divided them into odd and even; or of the human species, if you divided them into male and female; and only separated off Lydians or Phrygians, or any other tribe, and arrayed them against the rest of the world, when you could no longer make a division into parts which were also classes.

**Y. Soc.** Very true; but I wish that this distinction between a part and a class could still be made somewhat plainer.

**Str.** O Socrates, best of men, you are imposing upon me a very difficult task. We have already digressed further from our original intention than we ought, and you would have us wander still further away. But we must now return to our subject; and hereafter, when there is a leisure hour, we will follow up the other track; at the same time I wish you to guard against imagining that you ever heard me declare-

**Y. Soc.** What?

**Str.** That a class and a part are distinct.

**Y. Soc.** What did I hear, then?

**Str.** That a class is necessarily a part, but there is no similar necessity that a part should be a class; that is the view which I should always wish you to attribute to me, Socrates.

**Y. Soc.** So be it.

**Str.** There is another thing which I should like to know.

**Y. Soc.** What is it?

**Str.** The point at which we digressed; for, if I am not mistaken, the exact place was at the question, Where you would divide the management of herds. To this you appeared rather too ready to answer that there were two species of animals; man being one, and all brutes making up the other.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** I thought that in taking away a part you imagined that the remainder formed a class, because you were able to call them by the common name of brutes.

**Y. Soc.** That again is true.

**Str.** Suppose now, O most courageous of dialecticians, that some wise and understanding creature, such as a crane is reputed to be, were, in imitation of you, to make a similar division,



and set up cranes against all other animals to their own special glorification, at the same time jumbling together all the others, including man, under the appellation of brutes,-here would be the sort of error which we must try to avoid.

**Y. Soc.** How can we be safe?

**Str.** If we do not divide the whole class of animals, we shall be less likely to fall into that error.

**Y. Soc.** We had better not take the whole?

**Str.** Yes, there lay the source of error in our former division.

**Y. Soc.** How?

**Str.** You remember how that part of the art of knowledge which was concerned with command, had to do with the rearing of living creatures,-I mean, with animals in herds?

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** In that case, there was already implied a division of all animals into tame and wild; those whose nature can be tamed are called tame, and those which cannot be tamed are called wild.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** And the political science of which we are in search, is and ever was concerned with tame animals, and is also confined to gregarious animals.

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** But then ought not to divide, as we did, taking the whole class at once. Neither let us be in too great haste to arrive quickly at the political science; for this mistake has already brought upon us the misfortune of which the proverb speaks.

**Y. Soc.** What misfortune?

**Str.** The misfortune of too much haste, which is too little speed.

**Y. Soc.** And all the better, Stranger;-we got what we deserved.

**Str.** Very well: Let us then begin again, and endeavour to divide the collective rearing of animals; for probably the completion of the argument will best show what you are so anxious to know. Tell me, then-

**Y. Soc.** What?

**Str.** Have you ever heard, as you very likely may-for I do not suppose that you ever actually visited them-of the preserves of fishes in the Nile, and in the ponds of the Great King; or you may have seen similar preserves in wells at home?

**Y. Soc.** Yes, to be sure, I have seen them, and I have often heard the others described.

**Str.** And you may have heard also, and may have been-assured by report, although you have not travelled in those regions, of nurseries of geese and cranes in the plains of Thessaly?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** I asked you, because here is a new division of the management of herds, into the management of land and of water herds.

**Y. Soc.** There is.

**Str.** And do you agree that we ought to divide the collective rearing of herds into two corresponding parts, the one the rearing of water, and the other the rearing of land herds?

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** There is surely no need to ask which of these two contains the royal art, for it is evident to everybody.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** Any one can divide the herds which feed on dry land?

**Y. Soc.** How would you divide them?

**Str.** I should distinguish between those which fly and those which walk.

**Y. Soc.** Most true.

**Str.** And where shall we look for the political animal? Might not an idiot, so to speak, know that he is a pedestrian?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** The art of managing the walking animal has to be further divided, just as you might have an even number.

**Y. Soc.** Clearly.

**Str.** Let me note that here appear in view two ways to that part or class which the argument aims at reaching-the one is speedier way, which cuts off a small portion and leaves a large; the other agrees better with the principle which we were laying down, that as far as we can we should divide in the middle; but it is longer. We can take either of them, whichever we please.

**Y. Soc.** Cannot we have both ways?

**Str.** Together? What a thing to ask! but, if you take them in turn, you clearly may.

**Y. Soc.** Then I should like to have them in turn.

**Str.** There will be no difficulty, as we are near the end; if we had been at the beginning, or in the middle, I should have demurred to your request; but now, in accordance with your desire, let us

begin with the longer way; while we are fresh, we shall get on better. And now attend to the division.

**Y. Soc.** Let me hear.

**Str.** The tame walking herding animals are distributed by nature into two classes.

**Y. Soc.** Upon what principle?

**Str.** The one grows horns; and the other is without horns.

**Y. Soc.** Clearly.

**Str.** Suppose that you divide the science which manages pedestrian animals into two corresponding parts, and define them; for if you try to invent names for them, you will find the intricacy too great.

**Y. Soc.** How must I speak of them, then?

**Str.** In this way: let the science of managing pedestrian animals be divided into two parts and one part assigned to the horned herd and the other to the herd that has no horns.

**Y. Soc.** All that you say has been abundantly proved, and may therefore, be assumed.

**Str.** The king is clearly the shepherd a polled herd, who have no horns.

**Y. Soc.** That is evident.

**Str.** Shall we break up this hornless herd into sections, and endeavour to assign to him what is his?

**Y. Soc.** By all means.

**Str.** Shall we distinguish them by their having or not having cloven feet, or by their mixing or not mixing the breed? You know what I mean.

**Y. Soc.** What?

**Str.** I mean that horses and asses naturally breed from one another.

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** But the remainder of the hornless herd of tame animals will not mix the breed.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** And of which has the Statesman charge,-of the mixed or of the unmixed race?

**Y. Soc.** Clearly of the unmixed.

**Str.** I suppose that we must divide this again as before.

**Y. Soc.** We must.

**Str.** Every tame and herding animal has now been split up, with the exception of two species; for I hardly think that dogs should be reckoned among gregarious animals.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly not; but how shall we divide the two remaining species?

**Str.** There is a measure of difference which may be appropriately employed by you and Theaetetus, who are students of geometry.

**Y. Soc.** What is that?

**Str.** The diameter; and, again, the diameter of a diameter.

**Y. Soc.** What do you mean?

**Str.** How does man walk, but as a diameter whose power is two feet?

**Y. Soc.** Just so.

**Str.** And the power of the remaining kind, being the power of twice two feet, may be said to be the diameter of our diameter.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly; and now I think that I pretty nearly understand you.

**Str.** In these divisions, Socrates, I descry what would make another famous jest.

**Y. Soc.** What is it?

**Str.** Human beings have come out in the same class with the freest and airiest of creation, and have been running a race with them.

**Y. Soc.** I remark that very singular coincidence.

**Str.** And would you not expect the slowest to arrive last?

**Y. Soc.** Indeed I should.

**Str.** And there is a still more ridiculous consequence, that the king is found running about with the herd and in close competition with the bird-catcher, who of all mankind is most of an adept at the airy life.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** Then here, Socrates, is still clearer evidence of the truth of what was said in the enquiry about the Sophist?

**Y. Soc.** What?

**Str.** That the dialectical method is no respecter of persons, and does not set the great above the

small, but always arrives in her own way at the truest result.

**Y. Soc.** Clearly.

**Str.** And now, I will not wait for you to ask the, but will of my own accord take you by the shorter road to the definition of a king.

**Y. Soc.** By all means.

**Str.** I say that we should have begun at first by dividing land animals into biped and quadruped; and since the winged herd, and that alone, comes out in the same class with man, should divide bipeds into those which have feathers and those which have not, and when they have been divided, and the art of the management of mankind is brought to light, the time will have come to produce our Statesman and ruler, and set him like a charioteer in his place, and hand over to him the reins of state, for that too is a vocation which belongs to him.

**Y. Soc.** Very good; you have paid me the debt-I mean, that you have completed the argument, and I suppose that you added the digression by way of interest.

**Str.** Then now, let us go back to the beginning, and join the links, which together make the definition of the name of the Statesman's art.

**Y. Soc.** By all means.

**Str.** The science of pure knowledge had, as we said originally, a part which was the science of rule or command, and from this was derived another part, which was called command-for-self, on the analogy of selling-for-self; an important section of this was the management of living animals, and this again was further limited to the manage merit of them in herds; and again in herds of pedestrian animals. The chief division of the latter was the art of managing pedestrian animals which are without horns; this again has a part which can only be comprehended under one term by joining together three names-shepherding pure-bred animals. The only further subdivision is the art of man herding-this has to do with bipeds, and is what we were seeking after, and have now found, being at once the royal and political.

**Y. Soc.** To be sure.

**Str.** And do you think, Socrates, that we really have done as you say?

**Y. Soc.** What?

**Str.** Do you think, I mean, that we have really fulfilled our intention?-There has been a sort of discussion, and yet the investigation seems to me not to be perfectly worked out: this is where the enquiry fails.

**Y. Soc.** I do not understand.

**Str.** I will try to make the thought, which is at this moment present in my mind, clearer to us both.

**Y. Soc.** Let me hear.

**Str.** There were many arts of shepherding, and one of them was the political, which had the charge of one particular herd?

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** And this the argument defined to be the art of rearing, not horses or other brutes, but the art of rearing man collectively?

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** Note, however, a difference which distinguishes the king from all other shepherds.

**Y. Soc.** To what do you refer?

**Str.** I want to ask, whether any one of the other herdsmen has a rival who professes and claims to share with him in the management of the herd?

**Y. Soc.** What do you mean?

**Str.** I mean to say that merchants husbandmen, providers of food, and also training-masters and physicians, will all contend with the herdsmen of humanity, whom we call Statesmen, declaring that they themselves have the care of rearing of managing mankind, and that they rear not only the common herd, but also the rulers themselves.

**Y. Soc.** Are they not right in saying so?

**Str.** Very likely they may be, and we will consider their claim. But we are certain of this,-that no one will raise a similar claim as against the herdsman, who is allowed on all hands to be the sole and only feeder and physician of his herd; he is also their matchmaker and accoucheur; no one else knows that department of science. And he is their merry-maker and musician, as far as their nature is susceptible of such influences, and no one can console and soothe his own herd better than he can, either with the natural tones of his voice or with instruments. And the same may be said of tenders of animals in general.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** But if this is as you say, can our argument about the king be true and unimpeachable? Were we right in selecting him out of ten thousand other claimants to be the shepherd and rearer of the human flock?

**Y. Soc.** Surely not.

**Str.** Had we not reason just to now apprehend, that although we may have described a sort of royal form, we have not as yet accurately worked out the true image of the Statesman? and that we cannot reveal him as he truly is in his own nature, until we have disengaged and separated him from those who bang about him and claim to share in his prerogatives?

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** And that, Socrates, is what we must do, if we do not mean to bring disgrace upon the argument at its close.

**Y. Soc.** We must certainly avoid that.

**Str.** Then let us make a new beginning, and travel by a different road.

**Y. Soc.** What road?

**Str.** I think that we may have a little amusement; there is a famous tale, of which a good portion may with advantage be interwoven, and then we may resume our series of divisions, and proceed in the old path until we arrive at the desired summit. Shall we do as I say?

**Y. Soc.** By all means.

**Str.** Listen, then, to a tale which a child would love to hear; and you are not too old for childish amusement.

**Y. Soc.** Let me hear.

**Str.** There did really happen, and will again happen, like many other events of which ancient tradition has preserved the record, the portent which is traditionally said to have occurred in the quarrel of Atreus and Thyestes. You have heard no doubt, and remember what they say happened at that time?

**Y. Soc.** I suppose you to mean the token of the birth of the golden lamb.

**Str.** No, not that; but another part of the story, which tells how the sun and the stars once rose in the west, and set in the east, and that the god reversed their motion, and gave them that which they now have as a testimony to the right of Atreus.

**Y. Soc.** Yes; there is that legend also.

**Str.** Again, we have been often told of the reign of Cronos.

**Y. Soc.** Yes, very often.

**Str.** Did you ever hear that the men of former times were earthborn, and not begotten of one another?

**Y. Soc.** Yes, that is another old tradition.

**Str.** All these stories, and ten thousand others which are still more wonderful, have a common origin; many of them have been lost in the lapse of ages, or are repeated only in a disconnected form; but the origin of them is what no one has told, and may as well be told now; for the tale is suited to throw light on the nature of the king.

**Y. Soc.** Very good; and I hope that you will give the whole story, and leave out nothing.

**Str.** Listen, then. There is a time when God himself guides and helps to roll the world in its course; and there is a time, on the completion of a certain cycle, when he lets go, and the world being a living creature, and having originally received intelligence from its author and creator turns about and by an inherent necessity revolves in the opposite direction.

**Y. Soc.** Why is that?

**Str.** Why, because only the most divine things of all remain ever unchanged and the same, and body is not included in this class. Heaven and the universe, as we have termed them, although they have been endowed by the Creator with many glories, partake of a bodily nature, and therefore cannot be entirely free from perturbation. But their motion is, as far as possible, single and in the same place, and of the same kind; and is therefore only subject to a reversal, which is the least alteration possible. For the lord of all moving things is alone able to move of himself; and to think that he moves them at one time in one direction and at another time in another is blasphemy. Hence we must not say that the world is either self-moved always, or all made to go round by God in two opposite courses; or that two Gods, having opposite purposes, make it move round. But as I have already said (and this is the only remaining alternative) the world is guided at one time by an external power which is divine and receives fresh life and immortality from the renewing hand of the Creator, and again, when let go, moves spontaneously, being set free at such a time as to have, during infinite cycles of years, a reverse movement: this is due to its perfect balance, to its vast size, and to the fact that it turns on the smallest pivot.

**Y. Soc.** Your account of the world seems to be very reasonable indeed.

**Str.** Let us now reflect and try to gather from what has been said the nature of the phenomenon which we affirmed to be the cause of all these wonders. It is this.

**Y. Soc.** What?

**Str.** The reversal which takes place from time to time of the motion of the universe.

**Y. Soc.** How is that the cause?

**Str.** Of all changes of the heavenly motions, we may consider this to be the greatest and most complete.

**Y. Soc.** I should imagine so.

**Str.** And it may be supposed to result in the greatest changes to the human beings who are the inhabitants of the world at the time.

**Y. Soc.** Such changes would naturally occur.

**Str.** And animals, as we know, survive with difficulty great and serious changes of many different kinds when they come upon them at once.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** Hence there necessarily occurs a great destruction of them, which extends also to the life of man; few survivors of the race are left, and those who remain become the subjects of several novel and remarkable phenomena, and of one in particular, which takes place at the time when the transition is made to the cycle opposite to that in which we are now living.

**Y. Soc.** What is it?



**Str.** The life of all animals first came to a standstill, and the mortal nature ceased to be or look older, and was then reversed and grew young and delicate; the white locks of the aged darkened again, and the cheeks the bearded man became smooth, and recovered their former bloom; the bodies of youths in their prime grew softer and smaller, continually by day and night returning and becoming assimilated to the nature of a newly-born child in mind as well as body; in the succeeding stage they wasted away and wholly disappeared. And the bodies of those who died by violence at that time quickly passed through the like changes, and in a few days were no more seen.

**Y. Soc.** Then how, Stranger, were the animals created in those days; and in what way were they begotten of one another?

**Str.** It is evident, Socrates, that there was no such thing in the then order of nature as the procreation of animals from one another; the earth-born race, of which we hear in story, was the one which existed in those days—they rose again from the ground; and of this tradition, which is now-a-days often unduly discredited, our ancestors, who were nearest in point of time to the end of the last period and came into being at the beginning of this, are to us the heralds. And mark how consistent the sequel of the tale is; after the return of age to youth, follows the return of the dead, who are lying in the earth, to life; simultaneously with the reversal of the world the wheel of their generation has been turned back, and they are put together and rise and live in the opposite order, unless God has carried any of them away to some other lot. According to this tradition they of necessity sprang from the earth and have the name of earth-born, and so the above legend clings to them.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly that is quite consistent with what has preceded; but tell me, was the life which you said existed in the reign of Cronos in that cycle of the world, or in this? For the change in the course of the stars and the sun must have occurred in both.

**Str.** I see that you enter into my meaning;—no, that blessed and spontaneous life does not belong to the present cycle of the world, but to the previous one, in which God superintended the whole revolution of the universe; and the several parts the universe were distributed under the rule. certain inferior deities, as is the way in some places still. There were demigods, who were the shepherds of the various species and herds of animals, and each one was in all respects sufficient for those of whom he was the shepherd; neither was there any violence, or devouring of one another or war or quarrel among them; and I might tell of ten thousand other blessings, which belonged to that dispensation. The reason why the life of man was, as tradition says, spontaneous, is as follows: In those days God himself was their shepherd, and ruled over them, just as man, over them, who is by comparison a divine being, still rules over the lower animals. Under him there were no forms of government or separate possession of women and children; for all men rose again from the earth, having no memory, of the past. And although they had nothing of this sort, the earth gave them fruits in abundance, which grew on trees and shrubs unbidden, and were not planted by the hand of man. And they dwelt naked, and mostly in the open air, for the temperature of their seasons, was mild; and they had no beds, but lay on soft couches of grass, which grew plentifully out of the earth. Such was the life of man in the days of Cronos, Socrates; the character of our present life which is said to be under Zeus, you know from your own experience. Can you, and will you, determine which of them you deem the happier?

**Y. Soc.** Impossible.

**Str.** Then shall I determine for you as well as I can?

**Y. Soc.** By all means.

**Str.** Suppose that the nurslings of Cronos, having this boundless leisure, and the power of holding intercourse, not only with men, but with the brute creation, had used all these advantages with a view to philosophy, conversing with the brutes as well as with one another, and learning of every nature which was gifted with any special power, and was able to contribute some special experience to the store of wisdom there would be no difficulty in deciding that they would be a thousand times happier than the men of our own day. Or, again, if they had merely eaten and drunk until they were full, and told stories to one another and to the animals-such stories as are now attributed to them-in this case also, as I should imagine, the answer would be easy. But until some satisfactory witness can be found of the love of that age for knowledge and: discussion, we had better let the matter drop, and give the reason why we have unearthed this tale, and then we shall be able to get on.

In the fulness of time, when the change was to take place, and the earth-born race had all perished, and every soul had completed its proper cycle of births and been sown in the earth her appointed number of times, the pilot of the universe let the helm go, and retired to his place of view; and then Fate and innate desire reversed the motion of the world. Then also all the inferior deities who share the rule of the supreme power, being informed of what was happening, let go the parts of the world which were under their control. And the world turning round with a sudden shock, being impelled in an opposite direction from beginning to end, was shaken by a mighty earthquake, which wrought a new destruction of all manner of animals. Afterwards, when sufficient time had elapsed, the tumult and confusion and earthquake ceased, and the universal creature, once more at peace attained to a calm, and settle down into his own orderly and accustomed course, having the charge and rule of himself and of all the creatures which are contained in him, and executing, as far as he remembered them, the instructions of his Father and Creator, more precisely at first, but afterwards with less exactness. The reason of the falling off was the admixture of matter in him; this was inherent in the primal nature, which was full of disorder, until attaining to the present order. From God, the constructor; the world received all that is good in him, but from a previous state came elements of evil and unrighteousness, which, thence derived, first of all passed into the world, and were then transmitted to the animals. While the world was aided by the pilot in nurturing the animals, the evil was small, and great the good which he produced, but after the separation, when the world was let go, at first all proceeded well enough; but, as time went there was more and more forgetting, and the old discord again held sway and burst forth in full glory; and at last small was the good, and great was the admixture of evil, and there was a danger of universal ruin to the world, and the things contained in him. Wherefore God, the orderer of all, in his tender care, seeing that the world was in great straits, and fearing that all might be dissolved in the storm and disappear in infinite chaos, again seated himself at the helm; and bringing back the elements which had fallen into dissolution and disorder to the motion which had prevailed under his dispensation, he set them in order and restored them, and made the world imperishable and immortal.

And this is the whole tale, of which the first part will suffice to illustrate the nature of the king. For when the world turned towards the present cycle of generation, the age of man again stood still, and a change opposite to the previous one was the result. The small creatures which had almost disappeared grew in and stature, and the newly-born children of the earth became grey and died and sank into the earth again. All things changed, imitating and following the condition of the universe, and of necessity agreeing with that in their mode of conception and generation and nurture; for no animal; was any longer allowed to come into being in the earth through the agency of other creative beings, but as the world was ordained to be the lord of his own progress, in like manner the parts were ordained to grow and generate and give nourishment, as far as they

could, of themselves, impelled by a similar movement. And so we have arrived at the real end of this discourse; for although there might be much to tell of the lower animals, and of the condition out of which they changed and of the causes of the change, about men there is not much, and that little is more to the purpose. Deprived of the care of God, who had possessed and tended them, they were left helpless and defenceless, and were torn in pieces by the beasts, who were naturally fierce and had now grown wild. And in the first ages they were still without skill or resource; the food which once grew spontaneously had failed, and as yet they knew not how to procure it, because they had never felt the pressure of necessity. For all these reasons they were in a great strait; wherefore also the gifts spoken of in the old tradition were imparted to man by the gods, together with so much teaching and education as was indispensable; fire was given to them by Prometheus, the arts by Hephaestus and his fellow-worker, Athene, seeds and plants by others. From these is derived all that has helped to frame human life; since the care of the Gods, as I was saying, had now failed men, and they had to order their course of life for themselves, and were their own masters, just like the universal creature whom they imitate and follow, ever changing, as he changes, and ever living and growing, at one time in one manner, and at another time in another. Enough of the story, which may be of use in showing us how greatly we erred in the delineation of the king and the statesman in our previous discourse.

**Y. Soc.** What was this great error of which you speak?

**Str.** There were two; the first a lesser one, the other was an error on a much larger and grander scale.

**Y. Soc.** What do you mean?

**Str.** I mean to say that when we were asked about a king and statesman of the present; and generation, we told of a shepherd of a human flock who belonged to the other cycle, and of one who was a god when he ought to have been a man; and this a great error. Again, we declared him to be, the ruler of the entire State, without, explaining how: this was not the whole truth, nor very intelligible; but still it was true, and therefore the second error was not so, great as the first.

**Y Soc.** Very good.

**Str.** Before we can expect to have a perfect description of the statesman we must define the nature of his office.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** And the myth was introduced in order to show, not only that all others are rivals of true shepherd who is the object of our search, but in order that we might have a clearer view of him who is alone worthy to receive this appellation, because, he alone of shepherds and herdsmen, according to the image which we have employed, has the care of human beings.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** And I cannot help thinking, Socrates, that the form of the divine shepherd is even higher than that of a king; whereas the statesmen who are now on earth seem to be much more like their subjects in character, and which more nearly to partake of their breeding and education.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** Still they must be investigated all the same, to see whether, like the divine shepherd, they are above their subjects or on a level with them.

**Y. Soc.** Of course.

**Str.** To resume:-Do you remember that we spoke of a command-for-self exercised over animals, not singly but collectively, which we called the art of rearing a herd?

**Y. Soc.** Yes, I remember.

**Str.** There, somewhere, lay our error; for we never included or mentioned the Statesman; and we did not observe that he had no place in our nomenclature.

**Y. Soc.** How was that?

**Str.** All other herdsmen "rear" their herds, but this is not a suitable term to apply to the Statesman; we should use a name which is common to them all.

**Y. Soc.** True, if there be such a name.

**Str.** Why, is not "care" of herds applicable to all? For this implies no feeding, or any special duty; if we say either "tending" the herds, or "managing" the herds, or "having the care" of them, the same word will include all, and then we may wrap up the Statesman with the rest, as the argument seems to require.

**Y. Soc.** Quite right; but how shall we take the-next step in the division?

**Str.** As before we divided the art of "rearing" herds accordingly as they were land or water herds, winged and wingless, mixing or not mixing the breed, horned and hornless, so we may divide by these same differences the "teading" of herds, comprehending in our definition the kingship of to-day and the rule of Cronos.

**Y. Soc.** That is clear; but I still ask, what is to follow.

**Str.** If the word had been "managing" herds, instead of feeding or rearing them, no one would have argued that there was no care of men in the case of the politician, although it was justly contended, that there was no human art of feeding them which was worthy of the name, or at least, if there were, many a man had a prior and greater right to share in such an art than any king.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** But no other art or science will have a prior or better right than the royal science to care for human society and to rule over men in general.

**Y. Soc.** Quite true.

**Str.** In the next place, Socrates, we must surely notice that a great error was committed at the end of our analysis.

**Y. Soc.** What was it?

**Str.** Why, supposing we were ever so sure that there is such an art as the art of rearing or feeding bipeds, there was no reason why we should call this the royal or political art, as though there were no more to be said.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly not.

**Str.** Our first duty, as we were saying, was to remodel the name, so as to have the notion of care rather than of feeding, and then to divide, for there may be still considerable divisions.

**Y. Soc.** How can they be made?

**Str.** First, by separating the divine shepherd from the human guardian or manager.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** And the art of management which is assigned to man would again have to be subdivided.

**Y. Soc.** On what principle?

**Str.** On the principle of voluntary and compulsory.

**Y. Soc.** Why?

**Str.** Because, if I am not mistaken, there has been an error here; for our simplicity led us to rank king and tyrant together, whereas they are utterly distinct, like their modes of government.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** Then, now, as I said, let us make the correction and divide human care into two parts, on the principle of voluntary and compulsory.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** And if we call the management of violent rulers tyranny, and the voluntary management of herds of voluntary bipeds politics, may we not further assert that he who has this latter art of management is the true king and statesman?

**Y. Soc.** I think, Stranger, that we have now completed the account of the Statesman.

**Str.** Would that we had Socrates, but I have to satisfy myself as well as you; and in my judgment the figure of the king is not yet perfected; like statuaries who, in their too great haste, having overdone the several parts of their work, lose time in cutting them down, so too we, partly out of haste, partly out of haste, partly out of a magnanimous desire to expose our former error, and also because we imagined that a king required grand illustrations, have taken up a marvellous lump of fable, and have been obliged to use more than was necessary. This made us discourse at large, and, nevertheless, the story never came to an end. And our discussion might be compared to a picture of some living being which had been fairly drawn in outline, but had not yet attained the life and clearness which is given by the blending of colours. Now to intelligent persons a living being had better be delineated by language and discourse than by any painting or work of art: to the duller sort by works of art.

**Y. Soc.** Very true; but what is the imperfection which still remains? I wish that you would tell me.

**Str.** The higher ideas, my dear friend, can hardly be set forth except through the medium of examples; every man seems to know all things in a dreamy sort of way, and then again to wake up and to know nothing.

**Y. Soc.** What do you mean?

**Str.** I fear that I have been unfortunate in raising a question about our experience of knowledge.

**Y. Soc.** Why so?

**Str.** Why, because my "example" requires the assistance of another example.

**Y. Soc.** Proceed; you need not fear that I shall tire.

**Str.** I will proceed, finding, as I do, such a ready listener in you: when children are beginning to know their letters-

**Y. Soc.** What are you going to say?

**Str.** That they distinguish the several letters well enough in very short and easy syllables, and are able to tell them correctly.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** Whereas in other syllables they do not recognize them, and think and speak falsely of them.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** Will not the best and easiest way of bringing them to a knowledge of what they do not as yet know be-

**Y. Soc.** Be what?

**Str.** To refer them first of all to cases in which they judge correctly about the letters in question, and then to compare these with the cases in which they do not as yet know, and to show them that the letters are the same, and have the same character in both combination, until all cases in which they are right have been Placed side by side with all cases in which they are wrong. In this way they have examples, and are made to learn that each letter in every combination is always the same and not another, and is always called by the same name.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** Are not examples formed in this manner? We take a thing and compare it with another distinct instance of the same thing, of which we have a right conception, and out of the comparison there arises one true notion, which includes both of them.

**Y. Soc.** Exactly.



**Str.** Can we wonder, then, that the soul has the same uncertainty about the alphabet of things, and sometimes and in some cases is firmly fixed by the truth in each particular, and then, again, in other cases is altogether at sea; having somehow or other a correction of combinations; but when the elements are transferred into the long and difficult language (syllables) of facts, is again ignorant of them?

**Y. Soc.** There is nothing wonderful in that.

**Str.** Could any one, my friend, who began with false opinion ever expect to arrive even at a small portion of truth and to attain wisdom?

**Y. Soc.** Hardly.

**Str.** Then you and I will not be far wrong in trying to see the nature of example in general in a small and particular instance; afterwards from lesser things we intend to pass to the royal class, which is the highest form of the same nature, and endeavour to discover by rules of art what the management of cities is; and then the dream will become a reality to us.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** Then, once more, let us resume the previous argument, and as there were innumerable rivals of the royal race who claim to have the care of states, let us part them all off, and leave him alone; and, as I was saying, a model or example of this process has first to be framed.

**Y. Soc.** Exactly.

**Str.** What model is there which is small, and yet has any analogy with the political occupation? Suppose, Socrates, that if we have no other example at hand, we choose weaving, or, more precisely, weaving of wool-this will be quite enough, without taking the whole of weaving, to illustrate our meaning?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** Why should we not apply to weaving the same processes of division and subdivision which we have already applied to other classes; going once more as rapidly as we can through all the steps until we come to that which is needed for our purpose?

**Y. Soc.** How do you mean?

**Str.** I shall reply by actually performing the process.

**Y. Soc.** Very good.

**Str.** All things which we make or acquire are either creative or preventive; of the preventive class are antidotes, divine and human, and also defences; and defences are either military weapons or protections; and protections are veils, and also shields against heat and cold, and shields against heat and cold are shelters and coverings; and coverings are blankets and garments; and garments are some of them in one piece, and others of them are made in several parts; and of these latter some are stitched, others are fastened and not stitched; and of the not stitched, some are made of the sinews of plants, and some of hair; and of these, again, some are cemented with water and

earth, and others are fastened together by themselves. And these last defences and coverings which are fastened together by themselves are called clothes, and the art which superintends them we may call, from the nature of the operation, the art of clothing, just as before the art of the Statesman was derived from the State; and may we not say that the art of weaving, at least that largest portion of it which was concerned with the making of clothes, differs only in name from this art of clothing, in the same way that, in the previous case, the royal science differed from the political?

**Y. Soc.** Most true.

**Str.** In the next place, let us make the reflection, that the art of weaving clothes, which an incompetent person might fancy to have been sufficiently described, has been separated off from several others which are of the same family, but not from the co-operative arts.

**Y. Soc.** And which are the kindred arts?

**Str.** I see that I have not taken you with me. So I think that we had better go backwards, starting from the end. We just now parted off from the weaving of clothes, the making of blankets, which differ from each other in that one is put under and the other is put around! and these are what I termed kindred arts.

**Y. Soc.** I understand.

**Str.** And we have subtracted the manufacture of all articles made of flax and cords, and all that we just now metaphorically termed the sinews of plants, and we have also separated off the process of felting and the putting together of materials by stitching and sewing, of which the most important part is the cobbler's art.

**Y. Soc.** Precisely.

**Str.** Then we separated off the currier's art, which prepared coverings in entire pieces, and the art of sheltering, and subtracted the various arts of making water-tight which are employed in building, and in general in carpentering, and in other crafts, and all such arts as furnish impediments to thieving and acts of violence, and are concerned with making the lids of boxes and the fixing of doors, being divisions of the art of joining; and we also cut off the manufacture of arms, which is a section of the great and manifold art of making defences; and we originally began by parting off the whole of the magic art which is concerned with antidotes, and have left, as would appear, the very art of which we were in search, the art of protection against winter cold, which fabricates woollen defences, and has the name of weaving.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** Yes, my boy, but that is not all; for the first process to which the material is subjected is the opposite of weaving.

**Y. Soc.** How so?

**Str.** Weaving is a sort of uniting?

**Y. Soc.** Yes.



**Str.** But the first process is a separation of the clotted and matted fibres?

**Y. Soc.** What do you mean?

**Str.** I mean the work of the carder's art; for we cannot say that carding is weaving, or that the carder is a weaver.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly not.

**Str.** Again, if a person were to say that the art of making the warp and the woof was the art of weaving, he would say what was paradoxical and false.

**Y. Soc.** To be sure.

**Str.** Shall we say that the whole art of the fuller or of the mender has nothing to do with the care and treatment of clothes, or are we to regard all these as arts of weaving?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly not.

**Str.** And yet surely all these arts will maintain that they are concerned with the treatment and production of clothes; they will dispute the exclusive prerogative of weaving, and though assigning a larger sphere to that, will still reserve a considerable field for themselves.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** Besides these, there are the arts which make tools and instruments of weaving, and which will claim at least to be cooperative causes in every work of the weaver.

**Y. Soc.** Most true.

**Str.** Well, then, suppose that we define weaving, or rather that part of it which has been selected by us, to be the greatest and noblest of arts which are concerned with woollen garments—shall we be right? Is not the definition, although true, wanting in clearness and completeness; for do not all those other arts require to be first cleared away?

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** Then the next thing will be to separate them, in order that the argument may proceed in a regular manner?

**Y. Soc.** By all means.

**Str.** Let us consider, in the first place, that there are two kinds of arts entering into everything which we do.

**Y. Soc.** What are they?

**Str.** The one kind is the conditional or cooperative, the other the principal cause.

**Y. Soc.** What do you mean?

**Str.** The arts which do not manufacture the actual thing, but which furnish the necessary tools for the manufacture, without which the several arts could not fulfil their appointed work, are co-operative; but those which make the things themselves are causal.

**Y. Soc.** A very reasonable distinction.

**Str.** Thus the arts which make spindles, combs, and other instruments of the production of clothes may be called co-operative, and those which treat and fabricate the things themselves, causal.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** The arts of washing and mending, and the other preparatory arts which belong to the causal class, and form a division of the great art of adornment, may be all comprehended under what we call the fuller's art.

**Y. Soc.** Very good.

**Str.** Carding and spinning threads and all the parts of the process which are concerned with the actual manufacture of a woollen garment form a single art, which is one of those universally acknowledged-the art of working in wool.

**Y. Soc.** To be sure.

**Str.** Of working in wool again, there are two divisions, and both these are parts of two arts at once.

**Y. Soc.** How is that?

**Str.** Carding and one half of the use of the comb, and the other processes of wool-working which separate the composite, may be classed together as belonging both to the art of woolworking, and also to one of the two great arts which are of universal application-the art of composition and the art of division.

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** To the latter belong carding and the other processes of which I was just now speaking the art of discernment or division in wool and yarn, which is effected in one manner with the comb and in another with the hands, is variously described under all the names which I just now mentioned.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** Again, let us take some process of woolworking which is also a portion of the art of composition, and, dismissing the elements of division which we found there, make two halves, one on the principle of composition, and the other on the principle of division.

**Y. Soc.** Let that be done.

**Str.** And once more, Socrates, we must divide the part which belongs at once both to woolworking and composition, if we are ever to discover satisfactorily the aforesaid art of

weaving.

**Y. Soc.** We must.

**Str.** Yes, certainly, and let us call one part of the art the art of twisting threads, the other the art of combining them.

**Y. Soc.** Do I understand you, in speaking of twisting, to be referring to manufacture of the warp?

**Str.** Yes, and of the woof too; how, if not by twisting, is the woof made?

**Y. Soc.** There is no other way.

**Str.** Then suppose that you define the warp and the woof, for I think that the definition will be of use to you.

**Y. Soc.** How shall I define them?

**Str.** As thus: A piece of carded wool which is drawn out lengthwise and breadth-wise is said to be pulled out.

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** And the wool thus prepared when twisted by the spindle, and made into a firm thread, is called the warp, And the art which regulates these operations the art of spinning the warp.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** And the threads which are more loosely spun, having a softness proportioned to the intertexture of the warp and to the degree of force used in dressing the cloth-the threads which are thus spun are called the woof, and the art which is set over them may be called the art of spinning the woof.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** And, now, there can be no mistake about the nature of the part of weaving which we have undertaken to define. For when that part of the art of composition which is employed in the working of wool forms a web by the regular intertexture of warp and woof, the entire woven substance is called by us a woollen garment, and the art which presides over this is the art of weaving.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** But why did we not say at once that weaving is the art of entwining warp and woof, instead of making a long and useless circuit?

**Y. Soc.** I thought, Stranger, that there was nothing useless in what was said.

**Str.** Very likely, but you may not always think so, my sweet friend; and in case any feeling of dissatisfaction should hereafter arise in your mind, as it very well may, let me lay down a principle which will apply to arguments in general.

**Y. Soc.** Proceed.

**Str.** Let us begin by considering the whole nature of excess and defect, and then we shall have a rational ground on which we may praise or blame too much length or too much shortness in discussions of this kind.

**Y. Soc.** Let us do so.

**Str.** The points on which I think that we ought to dwell are the following:-

**Y. Soc.** What?

**Str.** Length and shortness, excess and defect; with all of these the art of measurement is conversant.

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** And the art of measurement has to be divided into two parts, with a view to our present purpose.

**Y. Soc.** Where would you make the division?

**Str.** As thus: I would make two parts, one having regard to the relativity of greatness and smallness to each other; and there is another, without which the existence of production would be impossible.

**Y. Soc.** What do you mean?

**Str.** Do you not think that it is only natural for the greater to be called greater with reference to the less alone, and the less reference to the greater alone?

**Y. Soc.** Yes.

**Str.** Well, but is there not also something exceeding and exceeded by the principle of the mean, both in speech and action, and is not this a reality, and the chief mark of difference between good and bad men?

**Y. Soc.** Plainly.

**Str.** Then we must suppose that the great and small exist and are discerned in both these ways, and not, as we were saying before, only relatively to one another, but there must also be another comparison of them with the mean or ideal standard; would you like to hear the reason why?

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** If we assume the greater to exist only in relation to the less, there will never be any comparison of either with the mean.

**Y. Soc.** True.

**Str.** And would not this doctrine be the ruin of all the arts and their creations; would not the art of the Statesman and the aforesaid art of weaving disappear? For all these arts are on the watch against excess and defect, not as unrealities, but as real evils, which occasion a difficulty in action; and the excellence of beauty of every work of art is due to this observance of measure.

**Y. Soc.** Certainly.

**Str.** But if the science of the Statesman disappears, the search for the royal science will be impossible.

**Y. Soc.** Very true.

**Str.** Well, then, as in the case of the Sophist we extorted the inference that not-being had an existence, because here was the point at which the argument eluded our grasp, so in this we must endeavour to show that the greater and, less are not only to be measured with one another, but also have to do with the production of the mean; for if this is not admitted, neither a statesman nor any other man of action can be an undisputed master of his science.

**Y. Soc.** Yes, we must certainly do again what we did then.

**Str.** But this, Socrates, is a greater work than the other, of which we only too well remember the length. I think, however, that we may fairly assume something of this sort-

**Y. Soc.** What?

**Str.** That we shall some day require this notion of a mean with a view to the demonstration of absolute truth; meanwhile, the argument that the very existence of the arts must be held to depend on the possibility of measuring more or less, not only with one another, but also with a view to the attainment of the mean, seems to afford a grand support and satisfactory proof of the doctrine which we are maintaining; for if there are arts, there is a standard of measure, and if there is a standard of measure, there are arts; but if either is wanting, there is neither.

**Y. Soc.** True; and what is the next step?

**Str.** The next step clearly is to divide the art of measurement into two parts, all we have said already, and to place in the one part all the arts which measure number, length, depth, breadth, swiftness with their opposites; and to have another part in which they are measured with the mean, and the fit, and the opportune, and the due, and with all those words, in short, which denote a mean or standard removed from the extremes.

**Y. Soc.** Here are two vast divisions, embracing two very different spheres.

**Str.** There are many accomplished men, Socrates, who say, believing themselves to speak wisely, that the art of measurement is universal, and has to do with all things. And this means what we are now saying; for all things which come within the province of art do certainly in some sense partake of measure. But these persons, because they are not accustomed to distinguish classes according to real forms, jumble together two widely different things, relation to one another, and to a standard, under the idea that they are the same, and also fall into the converse error of dividing other things not according to their real parts. Whereas the right way is, if a man has first seen the unity of things, to go on with the enquiry and not desist until he has found all the differences contained in it which form distinct classes; nor again should he be able to rest

contented with the manifold diversities which are seen in a multitude of things until he has comprehended all of them that have any affinity within the bounds of one similarity and embraced them within the reality of a single kind. But we have said enough on